

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6610

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, GR

SUBJECT: PRESSURE FOR DISCLOSURE OF DRAFT CONSTITUTION

1. SUMMARY. KANELLOPOULOS HAS REFUSED CARAMANLIS' OFFER TO SUPPORT HIM FOR PROVISIONAL PRESIDENT AND OPPOSITION LEADER MAVROS HAS ANNOUNCED CU/NF WILL VOTE AGAINST CONFIDENCE MOTION FOR NEW GOVERNMENT BECAUSE CARAMANLIS HAS NOT DISCLOSED NATURE OF DRAFT CONSTITUTION, PARTICULARLY HOW EXECUTIVE POWER WILL BE REINFORCED, PRIOR TO CALL FOR CONFIDENCE VOTE DECEMBER 14. END SUMMARY.

2. CU/NF LEADER GEORGE MAVROS IN FIRST MAJOR SPEECH OF PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION ON DECEMBER 12 ATTACKED CARAMANLIS FOR HOLDING OUT ON THE CONTENT OF THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION WHICH PRIME MINISTER HAS SAID HE WILL INTRODUCE TO PARLIAMENT "NEXT WEEK." MAVROS SAID CONSIDERATION OF CONSTITUTION SHOULD NOT BECOME PARTISAN ISSUE, BUT THAT CARAMANLIS IS PROVOKING PARTISAN DIVISION BY FAILING TO TAKE PARLIAMENT INTO HIS CONFIDENCE BEFORE HE ASKS FOR CONFIDENCE VOTE AND BY NOT PRESENTING HIS CONSTITUTIONAL IDEAS TO WHOLE NATION IN TIMELY FASHION. ALTHOUGH MAVROS WAS NOT OVERLY CRITICAL OF PRIME MINISTER REGARDING ANY OTHER POLICY POSITION, AND IN FACT AGREED WITH MOST OF

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POSITIONS CARAMANLIS GENERALLY STATED IN HIS DECEMBER 11

ADDRESS, HE ANNOUNCED CU/NF WOULD VOTE AGAINST CONFIDENCE MOTION DECEMBER 14 BECAUSE IT REMAINS "IN DARK" ON GOVERNMENT'S INTENTIONS FOR THE FUTURE CONSTITUTION.

3. CARAMANLIS HIMSELF HAS THUS FAR ONLY DECLARED THAT HE WILL REINFORCE THE EXECUTIVE POWER WITHOUT AT THE SAME TIME REDUCING THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO PARLIAMENT. STRONG IMPLICATION, HOWEVER, THAT THIS STRENGTHENING OF THE EXECUTIVE WOULD BE AT THE EXPENSE OF PARLIAMENT CAME IN STATEMENT TO PRESS DEC. 12 BY FORMER PREMIER PANAYOTIS KANELLOPOULOS. HE SAID ALTHOUGH HE HAD BEEN OFFERED, AND HAD ACCEPTED, NOMINATION AS PROVISIONAL PRESIDENT BY CARAMANLIS AT DECEMBER 10 MEETING, HE HAD DECIDED ON LATER REFLECTION TO DECLINE. HE IMPLIED THAT HIS RESERVATIONS GREW OUT OF CERTAIN VIEWS WHICH CARAMANLIS HELD REGARDING CONSTITUTION AND FROM PM'S PERSONAL ASPIRATIONS, ALTHOUGH HE WOULD NOT GO INTO DETAILS BECAUSE CARAMANLIS HAD PLEDGED HIM TO CONFIDENCE. KANELLOPOULOS DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD CONCLUDED IT WOULD NOT BE PROPER TO WIN OFFICE WITH THE VOTES OF THE OPPOSITION. WHICH HAD ALREADY ANNOUNCED IN HIS FAVOR AND WHICH REPRESENTED 46 PCT OF THE PEOPLE, WHEN THE MAJORITY WAS KEEPING OPPOSITION IN THE DARK ON THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION. HE ADDED HE HAD MADE SOME NEW PROPOSALS TO CARAMANLIS WHICH HE HOPED WOULD BE SINCERELY CONSIDERED "FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE NATION."

4. GENERAL INFERENCE DRAWN FROM KANELLOPOULOS CHANGE OF HEART IS THAT CARAMANLIS WANTED THE RESPECTED ELDER STATESMAN TO SERVE ONLY FOR A SHORT DURATION AND THEN WOULD ASSUME PRESIDENCY HIMSELF. SPECULATION CONTINUES THAT NEW DEMOCRACY MAJORITY WILL SUPPORT TSATSOS, GHIKAS, STASSINOPOULOS OR ZOLOTAS FOR PROVISIONAL POST, WHICH SHOULD BECOME AVAILABLE WHEN INCUMBENT PRESIDENT, GENERAL GHIZIKIS, RESIGNS WITHIN A FEW DAYS.
STEARNS

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